



**An
Phríomh-Oifig
Staidrimh**

Central
Statistics
Office

**Standard SIMS Report:
Crops and Livestock Survey June**



Single Integrated Metadata Structure (SIMS) Report

For

Crops and Livestock Survey June

This documentation applies to the reporting period:
2025

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2. Overview

The 'Crops and Livestock June Survey' is a survey of approximately 10,000 farms. A Census of Agriculture is carried out in Ireland approximately every 10 years in June. Farm Structure Surveys (FSS) are carried out in June at intervals (approximately every 3 years) in the period between each Census of Agriculture. The most recent census took place in 2020 and the last FSS took place in 2023. There are approximately 55,000 farms in an FSS sample. In a year when either an FSS or a census is carried out, these instruments replace the 'Crops and Livestock June survey' and results published in 'Crops and Livestock June survey' releases are based on returns from these sources. Since the 2010 Census, Crops and Livestock June surveys were carried out in 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018 & 2019. The purpose of the Crops and Livestock June survey is to estimate land utilisation and livestock numbers at State and regional level. There are two Crops and Livestock June survey results publications. The first publication is the provisional results and is usually published in September of Year N, where year N is the survey year (reference year). The final results are usually published in April, Year N+1 (following year).

The estimates for sheep are based on returns from the Crops and Livestock June survey of agricultural holdings. A specialist pig survey is conducted by the CSO due to the intensive nature of this activity. The estimates for cattle, goats and crops are obtained from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine's (DAFM) administrative data and ICBF administrative data.

Farms where the agricultural area used is at least one hectare (2.47 acres) are included in the Crops and Livestock June survey. Farms with less than one hectare may also be included if they are engaged in intensive production.

3. General Information

3.1. Statistical Category

Combination of administrative data and agricultural surveys.

3.2. Area of Activity

Agricultural Statistics

3.3. Contact

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Contact Organisation Unit:	Agricultural Statistics
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3.4. Objectives and Purpose; History

The objective of the survey is to compile data on land utilisation and livestock numbers at State and regional level. Farm surveys have been conducted in Ireland since 1847. In 1973, because of EU regulation, pig specific surveys were carried out in April, June, August, and December. From 1998, the pig survey is carried out in June & December only. Since 2025 the pig survey is only carried out in June. Results from the June Pig survey were published as a stand-alone release up to 2023 and pig totals are now reported in



the Crops and Livestock June survey provisional results release. Pig totals in the following categories are published in the final results release.

Female breeding pigs

Boars

Other pigs under 20 kg

Other pigs greater than 20kg

Up until June 2009, agriculture surveys (e.g. FSS and Crops and Livestock Survey June) and the Census collected data on the number of cattle held on farms under different cattle categories (e.g. dairy cows, male cattle 3 years and over etc.). From 2010, the CSO does not collect data on cattle. Published cattle numbers come from administrative data held by the DAFM. The DAFM's Animal Identification and Movement (AIM) system is a database which records all bovine birth, movements and disposals. The system captures details of all animal movements, and this administrative data enables the CSO to publish cattle category totals at county, regional NUTS 2 & NUTS 3 levels. Bull data is received quarterly in aggregate form from the ICBF (Irish Cattle Breeding Federation).

The Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) which was introduced in 2015 as part of the new measures agreed in the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy has been replaced in 2023 by the Basic Income Support for Sustainability Scheme (BISS). The BPS had replaced the Single Payment Scheme (SPS). Under the BISS, a farmer submits an application to the DAFM in which the farmer declares all of his land specifying the crop type of each parcel of land. This administrative data enables the CSO to publish crop statistics at a regional level. This means that the number of crop related questions on CSO agriculture survey forms has greatly reduced since the CSO commenced using administrative crop data from the DAFM. The use of administrative data improves the quality of the statistics and reduces respondent burden.

3.5. Periodicity

Annual

3.6. Client

General EU & National Requirements

3.7. Users

- Eurostat (the statistical service of European Commission)
- EU Commission
- DAFM
- Other sections within the CSO
- Semi-State organisations such as Teagasc
- General public

3.8. Legal Basis

EU Regulation 2022/2379 as regards statistics on agricultural input and output (SAIO)

EU Regulation 2023/1538 as regards crop production statistics

EU Regulation 2023/2745 as regards animal production statistics

4. Statistical Concepts, Methods

4.1. Subjects of the Statistics

Land Utilisation and Livestock Numbers



4.2. Units of Observation/Collection Units/Units of Presentation

The survey's unit of observation are

- (a) Sheep broken down into the sub-categories of, Rams, Ewes 2 year and over, Ewes less than 2 years, Other sheep less than 1 year (lambs) and Other sheep 1 year and over.
- (b) Cattle broken down into the sub-categories of Dairy cows, Other cows, Bulls, Male cattle 2 years and over, Female cattle 2 years and over, Male cattle 1-2 years, Female cattle 1-2 years, Male cattle under 1 year, Female cattle under 1 year.
- (c) Crops broken down into the sub-categories of Winter wheat, Spring wheat, Winter oats, Spring oats, Winter barley, Spring barley, Other cereals and Potatoes. Areas under other crop types are also published in the final results publication (see 3.10 below).
- (d) Other livestock (Pigs, Horses & ponies, Mules jennets & asses and Goats) totals are also published in the final results.

A farm is defined in accordance with the definition adopted for the EU surveys as a single unit, both technically and economically, which has a single management, and which produces agricultural products. Farms where the agricultural area used is at least 1 hectare (2.47 acres) may be included in the Crops and Livestock June Survey. Farms with less than 1 hectare may also be included if they are engaged in intensive production.

In the provisional release, results are presented at State level – the unit of presentation is thousand head of livestock and thousand hectares of crops. In the final release, results are also presented at regional NUTS 2 & NUTS 3 levels. Cattle totals are also published at a county level in the final results release.

4.3. Data Sources

Crops: The results for crops are based on data obtained from the DAFM's BISS.

Cattle: The results for cattle are obtained from DAFM's AIM system. Breeding Bull data is received from the Irish Cattle breeding Federation (ICBF).

Sheep: The results for sheep are based on the trends between the reference year and the preceding year, obtained by comparing the returns for each of the years for the same matched sample of farms.

Horses & ponies, Mules jennets & asses: The results are based on the trends between the reference year and the preceding year, obtained by comparing the returns for each of the years for the same matched sample of farms.

Goats: The results are obtained from DAFM's December Sheep and Goat Census from Year N-1 (year preceding reference year).

Pigs: A specialist pig survey is conducted by the CSO due to the intensive nature of this activity.

4.4. Reporting Unit/Respondents

Farms where the agricultural area used was at least 1 hectare (2.47 acres) may be included in the June Agricultural Surveys. Farms with less than 1 hectare may also be included if they were engaged in intensive production.

4.5. Type of Survey/Process

Postal Survey and web survey option, DAFM administrative data and ICBF administration data.

4.6. Characteristics of the Sample/Process



4.6.1. Population and Sampling Frame

A stand-alone register is used, which holds all identified farms in the State. This register is updated from registers held by the DAFM.

4.6.2. Sampling Design

The results are based on a matched sample methodology. As crop and cattle totals are taken from administrative sources, special emphasis is made to ensure that the sample is a representative sample of farms with sheep. In addition, emphasis is placed on ensuring that there are adequate farms in the sample for year N, which responded to the June survey in year N-1. This is required to support the matched sample methodology for estimating sheep totals.

4.7. Survey Technique/Data Transfer

The survey is carried out by post and follow up reminders are sent to non-respondents.

4.8. Questionnaire (including explanations)

The questionnaire is a four-page questionnaire which is simple in design to allow easy usage. Please see the following URL to view the survey form =>

<https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/surveyforms/cropsandlivestocksurveyjunefinal/>

4.9. Participation in the Survey

The survey is a voluntary survey on respondents.

4.10. Characteristics of the Survey Process and its Results

Data are collected for the following categories

Sheep

- Rams
- Ewes 2 years and over
- Ewes under 2 years
- Sheep less than 1 year (lambs)
- Other Sheep 1 year and over

Cattle (from administrative sources)

- Dairy cows
- Other cows
- Bulls
- Male cattle 2 years and over
- Female cattle 2 years and over
- Male cattle 1-2 years
- Female cattle 1-2 years
- Male cattle under 1 year
- Female cattle under 1 year

Crops (from administrative source)

- Winter wheat
- Spring wheat
- Winter oats
- Spring oats
- Winter barley
- Spring barley
- Other cereals
- Potatoes



The final results publication also reports the area covered (in hectares) by the following crop categories at a NUTS 2 & NUTS 3 level.

- Beans and peas
- Oilseed rape
- Arable silage
- Maize silage
- Fodder rape and kale
- Potatoes
- Turnips
- Beet (includes sugar beet and fodder beet)
- Vegetables for sale
- Fruit
- Nurseries, horticulture etc.
- Other crops (includes fallow land, miscanthus and other energy crops)

The final results publication also reports the area covered (in hectares) by silage, hay, pasture, and rough grazing at a NUTS 2 & NUTS 3 level.

Pigs

Data is collected for the following categories of pig in the June and December Pig surveys

Breeding Pigs

- Boars
- Sows in pig
- Other Sows
- Gilts in pig
- Gilts not yet served

Other Pigs by live weight

- Pigs under 20 kg
- Pigs 20 – 50 kg
- Pigs 50 – 80 kg
- Pigs 80 – 110 kg
- Pigs 110 kg and above

In the 'Crops and Livestock Survey Final Results June' the female breeding pig categories listed above are combined, and the other pigs by live weight categories are also combined into pigs under 20 kg and pigs greater than 20 kg.

Horses & ponies, Mules jennets & asses, Goats

Estimates for these categories of livestock are published in the final results release at a regional NUTS 2 & NUTS 3 level. Goat estimates are obtained from DAFM's December Sheep and Goat Census from Year N-1 (year preceding reference year).

4.11. Classifications used

The classifications used are listed at 3.10 above and are based on Eurostat legal requirements.

4.12. Regional Breakdown of Results

A regional breakdown of crop and livestock results is published as part of the June Crops & Livestock final results. NUTS 2 (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) data for categories of crops and livestock is also submitted to Eurostat.

From the 1st of January 2018 an Amendment of the EU NUTS legislation came into effect. This reflects the new regional assembly structure and the other changes under the 2014 Local Government Act. These changes included:



- The amalgamation of the local authorities of Tipperary North and South, Limerick City and County Councils, Waterford City and Councils.
- The establishment of three Regional Assemblies (Northern & Western, Southern, Eastern & Midland).
- At NUTS 3 level, South Tipperary was transferred from the South-East into the Mid-West NUTS 3 Region and County Louth was moved from the Border to the Mid-East NUTS 3 Region.
- The establishment of the three NUTS 2 Regions which correspond to the three Regional Assemblies and are groupings of the new NUTS 3 Regions.

The composition of the new Regions breakdown is outlined below.

Northern & Western NUTS 2 Region

Border Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo
West Galway, Mayo, Roscommon

Southern NUTS 2 Region

Mid-West Clare, Limerick, Tipperary
South-East Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford, Wexford
South-West Cork, Kerry

Eastern & Midland NUTS 2 Region

Mid-East Kildare, Meath, Wicklow, Louth, Dublin
Midland Laois, Longford, Offaly, Westmeath

5. Production of the Statistics, Data Processing, Quality Assurance

5.1. Data Capture

Forms are scanned, and the dataset is then entered into the Data Management System (DMS) for edit checks etc. Administrative data from the DAFM is then merged with the scanned returns. A clean dataset is exported from the Data Management System (DMS) to SAS for analysis.

Data received by phone is keyed into the electronic Questionnaire at <http://launch.survey.cso.ie/>, and the datasets are then uploaded into the DMS for edit checks. A clean dataset is exported from the DMS to SAS for analysis.

All Pig data (received by post or phone) is keyed into the electronic Questionnaire at <http://launch.survey.cso.ie/>, and the datasets are then uploaded into the DMS for edit checks. A clean dataset is exported from the DMS to SAS for analysis.

5.2. Coding

No coding used within survey process.

5.3. Data Editing

Data editing is performed using the DMS. Edit rules focus on difference between current and previous year's returns. Cases where the change from one year to the next is outside certain bounds are examined to ensure that the change is not due to an error on the returned form. Data from administrative sources is not edited.



5.4. Imputation (for Non-Response or Incomplete Datasets)

Imputation is not used.

5.5. Grossing and Weighting

Results are based on a matched sample methodology, so no grossing or weighting is used.

5.6. Computation of Outputs Estimation Methods Used

The results for crops, cattle and goats are obtained from administrative sources. The pig survey is a de facto census of the specialised pig farms that are responsible for the vast majority of pig farming within the State. Pig, Sheep, Horses & ponies and Mules jennets & asses totals are estimated using a matched sample methodology. A series of SAS programmes are run to identify all farmers who responded in the current year and in the previous year. Then, for each category of livestock (where matched sampling is used for total estimation) the percentage change between the two years is calculated. This percentage change is then applied to the published totals for the previous year to come up with estimates for the totals for the current year.

The reference date for CSO June agricultural surveys is 1 June. The total lamb to total ewe ratio decreases in late returns. This is most likely due to some farmers specifying the number of lambs on their farms on the date they fill in the survey form as distinct from the number of lambs on the farm on the survey reference date (i.e., 1 June). Many spring lambs are slaughtered in June (over 247,000 in June 2020) and this explains the decrease in lamb to ewe ratio in late returns. In farms with sheep, adjustment is made to lamb numbers in the case of late survey returns.

SAS programmes are run to determine the percentage change for each category of livestock and every farm is identified where the change from one year to the next is outside certain bounds. In a case where the difference is deemed to be due to an error, the farm is excluded from the sample for the category of livestock where an error is detected.

The matched sample methodology data are compared to the Census of Agriculture data collected every ten years. Matched sample results are subject to revision after each Census.

5.7. Other Quality Assurance Techniques Used

- Cross referencing of survey results against DAFM's Sheep & Goat and Pig Censuses.
- Consistent Macro edits within DMS are performed which compare totals over a number of years.
- Consultation with experts within industry to ascertain reasons behind emerging trends.

6. Quality

6.1. Relevance

The information is used at European level to monitor the operation of Irish farms. The results are used within the CSO for agriculture and national accounts. They are also used by government departments, companies and semi-state organisations to monitor trends in agriculture in Ireland.

6.2. Accuracy and Reliability

6.2.1. Sampling Effect & Representativity



As administrative sources are used for crop and cattle totals and the pig survey is a de facto census of the specialised pig farms that are responsible for the vast majority of pig farming within the state, the focus of the June survey is on the correct measurement of sheep totals. Farm Structure Surveys are carried out at intervals in the period between each complete Census of Agriculture. The last Farm Structure Survey took place in 2023. The Farm Structure Survey is considered a representative sample of all farms in the state and includes new farms obtained from administrative records held by the Department of Agriculture (DAFM). The June sample is selected in a manner that ensures a representative sample of farms with sheep. In addition, emphasis is placed on ensuring that there are adequate farms in the sample for year N (reference year), which responded to the June survey (or FSS or Census) in year N-1 (preceding year). This is required to support the matched sample methodology for estimating sheep totals.

6.2.2. Non-Sampling Effects

6.2.2.1. Quality of the Data Sources used (other than survey register)

No other data sources (besides administrative) used in preparation of results.

6.2.2.2. Register Coverage

In the case of the Pig register, the register is intended to cover all specialist pig farms. Whereas there is likely to be some minor coverage issues, these are unlikely to affect results due to match sample methodology.

The agriculture register is updated with new farms as identified in administrative records held by the DAFM.

6.2.2.3. Non-response (Unit and Item)

Farms who fail to respond are removed from the analysis and calculation of percentage change. It should be noted that there is a high response rate to the survey (greater than 80%) at item level, as many farms do not contain all categories these are included in analysis as actual zero.

6.2.2.4. Measurement Errors

Measurement errors are not formally calculated for the Survey. The questionnaire is clear and unambiguous and easily understood by respondents. Crop, cattle, and goat published totals are taken from the DAFM administrative data.

6.2.2.5. Processing Errors

The potential for processing errors is limited due to well defined processes within the DMS. Numerous edit checks are performed to ensure reasonableness of the data used at aggregation stage. Macro edit checks, where totals for each category are compared with previous years are performed on all results to ensure consistency and identify processing errors.

6.2.2.6. Model-related Effects

No known model related effects.

6.3. Timeliness and Punctuality

6.3.1. Provisional Results

Provisional results from the June Crops and Livestock Survey are published at t+18 weeks after the reference date of the survey.

6.3.2. Final Results

Final results from the June Crops and Livestock Survey are published at t+48 weeks after the reference date of the survey.



Data are transmitted to Eurostat in adherence with deadlines in Regulation (EC) No. 1165/2008 (livestock statistics) and Regulation (EC) No. 543/2009 (crop statistics).

6.4. Coherence

Consistency checks against other data providers, Teagasc, Bord Bia and the DAFM

6.5. Comparability

As a common legislative framework is in place across the European Union for this survey, results are comparable against other European Union countries.

In terms of times series, state results are comparable from 2008 to date for crop data. Regional data prior to 2013 are available using older EU NUTS regions. Therefore, regional data is comparable from 2013.

State results are comparable from 2005 to date for livestock numbers. Regional data prior to 2015 are available using older EU NUTS regions. Therefore, regional data is comparable from 2015.

6.6. Accessibility and Clarity

6.6.1. Assistance to Users, Special Analyses

All assistance within the bounds of maintaining confidentiality is given to users. Decisions on whether to perform special analyses are taken on a case by case basis.

6.6.2. Revisions

Revisions do not usually occur from one survey to the next, but revision may take place due to changes in methodologies and data collection methods. From 2020 onwards bull data is obtained from the ICBF (Irish Cattle Breeding Federation). This data was used to revise all Bull figures from 2010-2019.

6.6.3. Publications

6.6.3.1. Releases, Regular Publications

Crops and Livestock Survey, Provisional Estimates June

Crops and Livestock Survey, Final Results June

The releases are available on the CSO website at 11am on the day of publication.

<https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/agriculture/>

6.6.3.2. Internet

Area under crops

<https://data.cso.ie/table/AQA06>

Livestock Numbers

<https://data.cso.ie/table/AAA09>

Cattle Numbers

<https://data.cso.ie/table/AAA10>

<https://data.cso.ie/table/AAA11>

And on the Eurostat website at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>

6.6.3.3. Statistical Reports

6.6.4. Confidentiality



All data from respondents are treated as strictly confidential in accordance with the Statistics Act 1993. Care is taken to ensure that disclosure of potentially confidential results is avoided.

7. Additional documentation and publications